

Part 2 – Amendment to the Claims

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Currently Amended) A method as defined in claim ~~4~~26, further comprising:

selecting the clearance measurement device to include a piece of impression foam having a crush characteristic which collapses the impression

5 foam upon the application of force to the impression foam; and

evaluating the clearance at the predetermined location by determining the extent of collapse of the impression foam.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently Amended) A method as defined in claim ~~3~~11, further comprising:

selecting the impression foam to have the crush characteristic which has the capability to collapse to at least 80% of an initial thickness of non-

5 collapsed impression foam.

5. (Currently Amended) A method as defined in claim ~~3~~11, further comprising:

selecting the impression foam to have the crush characteristic which has the capability to collapse to at least 90% of an initial thickness of non-

5 collapsed impression foam.

6. (Currently Amended) A method as defined in claim ~~3~~11, further comprising:

selecting the impression foam to have the crush characteristic which has the capability to collapse to a predetermined fraction of an initial thickness of

5 non-collapsed impression foam, and

selecting the impression foam with the predetermined fraction being sufficiently small to avoid creating an unnatural force against the anatomical portion upon the impression foam fully collapsing.

7. (Currently Amended) A method as defined in claim ~~3~~11, further

comprising:

selecting the impression foam to have the crush characteristic in which a crushing force is within the range of 1.50 to 1.85 pounds per square inch.

8. (Currently Amended) A method as defined in claim ~~3-11~~, further comprising:

selecting the impression foam to have the crush characteristic in which a crushing force is approximately 1.56 pounds per square inch.

9. (Currently Amended) ~~A method as defined in claim 3, further comprising:~~ A method of evaluating clearance between a support contour of a seat cushion and an adjacent pelvic and proximal thigh anatomical portion of a person sitting on the cushion, comprising:

5                   selecting a piece of impression foam as a clearance measurement device, the impression foam having a crush characteristic which collapses the impression foam upon the application of force to the impression foam;

locating the clearance measurement device on the support contour at a predetermined location where the clearance is to be evaluated;

10                  sitting the person on the cushion with the clearance measurement device located between the anatomical portion and the support contour at the predetermined location where the clearance is to be evaluated;

evaluating the clearance at the predetermined location by determining the extent of collapse of the impression foam as a result of the person sitting on the cushion with the anatomical portion adjacent to the support contour while the impression foam was located at the predetermined location; and

                    evaluating the clearance by attempting to collapse the impression foam to a greater extent than the impression foam was collapsed by sitting the person on the cushion with the anatomical portion adjacent to the support contour.

10. (Currently Amended) ~~A method as defined in claim 3, further comprising:~~ A method of evaluating clearance between a support contour of a seat cushion and an adjacent pelvic and proximal thigh anatomical portion of a person

sitting on the cushion, comprising:

5                   selecting a piece of impression foam as a clearance measurement device, the impression foam having a crush characteristic which collapses the impression foam upon the application of force to the impression foam;

locating the clearance measurement device on the support contour at a predetermined location where the clearance is to be evaluated;

10                   sitting the person on the cushion with the clearance measurement device located between the anatomical portion and the support contour at the predetermined location where the clearance is to be evaluated;

evaluating the clearance at the predetermined location by determining the extent of collapse of the impression foam as a result of the person  
15 sitting on the cushion with the anatomical portion adjacent to the support contour while the impression foam was located at the predetermined location; and

evaluating the clearance by forming a hole through the impression foam at a location where the impression foam was collapsed by sitting the person on the cushion with the anatomical portion adjacent to the support contour.

11.   (Currently Amended) ~~A method as defined in claim 3, further comprising:~~ A method of evaluating clearance between a support contour of a seat cushion and an adjacent pelvic and proximal thigh anatomical portion of a person sitting on the cushion, comprising:

5                   selecting a piece of impression foam as a clearance measurement device, the impression foam having a crush characteristic which collapses the impression foam upon the application of force to the impression foam;

locating the clearance measurement device on the support contour at a predetermined location where the clearance is to be evaluated;

10                   sitting the person on the cushion with the clearance measurement device located between the anatomical portion and the support contour at the predetermined location where the clearance is to be evaluated;

evaluating the clearance at the predetermined location by

15 determining the extent of collapse of the impression foam as a result of the person  
sitting on the cushion with the anatomical portion adjacent to the support contour  
while the impression foam was located at the predetermined location; and  
enclosing the piece of impression foam within a flexible plastic envelope prior to locating the clearance measurement device on the support contour at the predetermined location where the clearance is to be evaluated.

12. (Previously Amended) A method as defined in claim 4-~~26~~, further comprising:

5 selecting the clearance measurement device to include a piece of  
putty-like substance having a malleable characteristic which indents the putty-like  
substance upon the application of force to the putty-like substance; and  
evaluating the clearance at the predetermined location by  
determining the extent of indentation of the putty-like substance.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Currently Amended) A method as defined in claim 4~~3~~ 18, further comprising:

5 establishing a predetermined thickness of the putty-like substance  
prior to locating the putty-like substance on the support contour at the  
predetermined location where the clearance is to be evaluated and prior to sitting  
the person on the cushion with the anatomical portion adjacent to the support  
contour while the putty-like substance was located at the predetermined location.

15. (Original) A method as defined in claim 14, further comprising:  
evaluating the clearance by determining whether the putty-like  
substance has been indented with respect to the predetermined thickness.

16. (Original) A method as defined in claim 15, further comprising:  
establishing the predetermined thickness uniformly over an entire  
surface of the putty-like substance.

17. (Currently Amended) A method as defined in claim 4~~3~~ 18, further comprising:

determining an initial thickness of the putty-like substance prior to locating the putty-like substance on the support contour at the predetermined location where the clearance is to be evaluated and prior to sitting the person on the cushion with the anatomical portion adjacent to the support contour while the putty-like substance was located at the predetermined position; and

evaluating the clearance by determining whether the initial thickness of the putty-like substance has changed as a result of sitting the person on the cushion with the anatomical portion adjacent to the support contour.

18. (Currently Amended) ~~A method as defined in claim 13, further comprising:~~ A method of evaluating clearance between a support contour of a seat cushion and an adjacent pelvic and proximal thigh anatomical portion of a person sitting on the cushion, comprising:

selecting a putty-like substance as a clearance measurement device which deforms in response to force applied thereto, the putty-like substance having a malleable characteristic which indents the putty-like substance upon the application of force to the putty-like substance;

locating the clearance measurement device on the support contour at a predetermined location where the clearance is to be evaluated;

sitting the person on the cushion with the clearance measurement device located between the anatomical portion and the support contour at the predetermined location where the clearance is to be evaluated;

evaluating the clearance at the predetermined location by determining the extent of indentation of the putty-like substance as a result of the person sitting on the cushion with the anatomical portion adjacent to the support contour while the putty-like substance was located at the predetermined location;

measuring an initial thickness of the putty-like substance prior to locating the putty-like substance on the support contour at the predetermined location where the clearance is to be evaluated and prior to sitting the person on the cushion with the anatomical portion adjacent to the support contour;

forming a hole through the putty-like substance at a location corresponding to the predetermined location where the clearance is to be evaluated after the person sat on the cushion with the anatomical portion adjacent to the support contour;

measuring the thickness of the putty-like substance at the hole; and evaluating the clearance by comparing the measured thickness with the initial thickness.

19. (Currently Amended) ~~A method as defined in claim 13, further comprising:~~ A method of evaluating clearance between a support contour of a seat cushion and an adjacent pelvic and proximal thigh anatomical portion of a person sitting on the cushion, comprising:

selecting a putty-like substance as a clearance measurement device which deforms in response to force applied thereto, the putty-like substance having a malleable characteristic which indents the putty-like substance upon the application of force to the putty-like substance;

locating the clearance measurement device on the support contour at a predetermined location where the clearance is to be evaluated;

sitting the person on the cushion with the clearance measurement device located between the anatomical portion and the support contour at the predetermined location where the clearance is to be evaluated;

evaluating the clearance at the predetermined location by determining the extent of indentation of the putty-like substance as a result of the person sitting on the cushion with the anatomical portion adjacent to the support contour while the putty-like substance was located at the predetermined location;  
and

enclosing the putty-like substance within a flexible plastic envelope prior to locating the clearance measurement device on the support contour at a predetermined location where the clearance is to be evaluated[[:]];

20. (Currently Amended) ~~A method as defined in claim 1, further~~

comprising: A method of evaluating clearance between a support contour of a seat cushion and an adjacent pelvic and proximal thigh anatomical portion of a person sitting on the cushion, comprising:

5                   selecting a clearance measurement device which deforms in response to force applied thereto;

                    selecting the clearance measurement device to include a flexible envelope containing fluid;

locating the clearance measurement device on the support contour at  
10   a predetermined location where the clearance is to be evaluated;

sitting the person on the cushion with the clearance measurement device located between the anatomical portion and the support contour at the predetermined location where the clearance is to be evaluated;

                    applying pressure to conduct the fluid from the envelope by sitting the  
15   person on the cushion with the envelope between the anatomical portion and the support contour; and

                    evaluating the clearance at the predetermined location by  
determining amount of fluid remaining in the envelope after the person has been  
sitting on the cushion with the anatomical portion adjacent the support contour  
20   while the clearance measurement device was located at the predetermined location.

21.   (Currently Amended) A method as defined in claim 4 26, further comprising:

                    using as the clearance measurement device a flexible envelope containing fluid;

5                   applying pressure to conduct the fluid from the envelope by sitting the person on the cushion with the envelope between the anatomical portion and the support contour; and

                    evaluating the clearance at the predetermined location by  
determining the amount of fluid remaining in the envelope after the person has

10 been sitting on the cushion with the anatomical portion adjacent the support  
contour while the clearance measurement device was located at the  
predetermined location.

22. (Currently Amended) A method as defined in claim ~~22~~ 20, further  
comprising:

establishing a predetermined initial amount of fluid in the envelope  
prior to locating the envelope on the support contour at the predetermined location  
5 where the clearance is to be evaluated and prior to sitting the person on the  
cushion with the anatomical portion adjacent to the support contour.

23. (Currently Amended) A method as defined in claim ~~23~~ 20, further  
comprising:

conducting the fluid from the envelope through a one-way valve  
which permits fluid flow out of the envelope and prevents fluid flow into the  
5 envelope.

24. (Currently Amended) A method as defined in claim ~~24~~ 20, further  
comprising:

measuring the amount of fluid in the envelope prior to locating the  
envelope on the support contour at the predetermined location where the  
5 clearance is to be evaluated and prior to sitting the person on the cushion with the  
anatomical portion adjacent to the support contour;

measuring the amount of fluid remaining in the envelope after the  
person has been sitting on the cushion with the anatomical portion adjacent the  
support contour while the flexible envelope containing fluid was located at the  
10 predetermined location; and

evaluating the clearance by comparing the measured initial amount  
of fluid with the measured remaining amount of fluid.

25. (Currently Amended) A method as defined in claim ~~4~~ 26, used to  
measure the clearance with respect to a wheelchair user and a wheelchair  
cushion.



26. (Currently Amended) A method ~~as defined in claim 1, used of~~  
evaluating clearance between a plurality of different support contours of seat  
cushions and an adjacent pelvic and proximal thigh anatomical portion of a person  
sitting on each cushion while supported by the different support contours in order  
5 to determine an appropriate one of a plurality of different cushions which each  
have a different support contour for supporting a cushion to support the anatomical  
portion of the person, comprising: the method comprising:  
selecting a clearance measurement device which deforms in  
response to force applied thereto;  
10 locating the clearance measurement device on the support contour at  
a predetermined location where the clearance is to be evaluated;  
sitting the person on the cushion with the clearance measurement  
device located between the anatomical portion and the support contour at the  
predetermined location where the clearance is to be evaluated;  
15 evaluating the clearance at the predetermined location by  
determining the extent to which the clearance measurement device was deformed  
as a result of the person sitting on the cushion with the anatomical portion adjacent  
to the support contour while the clearance measurement device was located at the  
predetermined location;  
20 performing the aforesaid locating, sitting and evaluating steps with a  
first cushion having a first support contour to obtain a first clearance from the first  
support contour;  
performing the aforesaid locating, sitting and evaluating steps with a  
second cushion having a second support contour to obtain a second clearance  
25 from the second support contour at substantially the same predetermined location  
that the first clearance was obtained from the first support contour; and  
selecting one of the first or second support contours by evaluating  
the first and second clearances relative to one another.

27. (New) A method as defined in claim 26 wherein the clearance

measurement device includes an impression foam.

28. (New) A method as defined in claim 26 wherein the clearance measurement device includes a putty-like substance.

29. (New) A method as defined in claim 26 wherein the clearance measurement device includes a flexible envelope containing a fluid.

30. (New) A method as defined in claim 9, used to measure the clearance with respect to a wheelchair user and a wheelchair cushion.

31. (New) A method as defined in claim 10, used to measure the clearance with respect to a wheelchair user and a wheelchair cushion.

32. (New) A method as defined in claim 11, used to measure the clearance with respect to a wheelchair user and a wheelchair cushion.

33. (New) A method as defined in claim 18, used to measure the clearance with respect to a wheelchair user and a wheelchair cushion.

34. (New) A method as defined in claim 19, used to measure the clearance with respect to a wheelchair user and a wheelchair cushion.

35. (New) A method as defined in claim 20, used to measure the clearance with respect to a wheelchair user and a wheelchair cushion.

36. (New) A method as defined in claim 9, further comprising:  
selecting the impression foam to have the crush characteristic which has the capability to collapse to at least 90% of an initial thickness of non-collapsed impression foam.

37. (New) A method as defined in claim 9, further comprising:  
selecting the impression foam to have the crush characteristic which has the capability to collapse to a predetermined fraction of an initial thickness of non-collapsed impression foam, and

5                    selecting the impression foam with the predetermined fraction being sufficiently small to avoid creating an unnatural force against the anatomical portion upon the impression foam fully collapsing.

38. (New) A method as defined in claim 9, further comprising:

selecting the impression foam to have the crush characteristic in which a crushing force is within the range of 1.50 to 1.85 pounds per square inch.

39. (New) A method as defined in claim 9, further comprising:

selecting the impression foam to have the crush characteristic in which a crushing force is approximately 1.56 pounds per square inch.

40. (New) A method as defined in claim 10, further comprising:

selecting the impression foam to have the crush characteristic which has the capability to collapse to at least 90% of an initial thickness of non-collapsed impression foam.

41. (New) A method as defined in claim 10, further comprising:

selecting the impression foam to have the crush characteristic which has the capability to collapse to a predetermined fraction of an initial thickness of non-collapsed impression foam, and

5 selecting the impression foam with the predetermined fraction being sufficiently small to avoid creating an unnatural force against the anatomical portion upon the impression foam fully collapsing.

42. (New) A method as defined in claim 10, further comprising:

selecting the impression foam to have the crush characteristic in which a crushing force is within the range of 1.50 to 1.85 pounds per square inch.

43. (New) A method as defined in claim 10, further comprising:

selecting the impression foam to have the crush characteristic in which a crushing force is approximately 1.56 pounds per square inch.

44. (New) A method as defined in claim 19, further comprising:

5 establishing a predetermined thickness of the putty-like substance prior to locating the putty-like substance on the support contour at the predetermined location where the clearance is to be evaluated and prior to sitting the person on the cushion with the anatomical portion adjacent to the support contour while the putty-like substance was located at the predetermined location.

45. (New) A method as defined in claim 44, further comprising:

evaluating the clearance by determining whether the putty-like substance has been indented with respect to the predetermined thickness.

46. (New) A method as defined in claim 45, further comprising:  
establishing the predetermined thickness uniformly over an entire surface of the putty-like substance.

47. (New) A method as defined in claim 19, further comprising:  
determining an initial thickness of the putty-like substance prior to locating the putty-like substance on the support contour at the predetermined location where the clearance is to be evaluated and prior to sitting the person on the cushion with the anatomical portion adjacent to the support contour while the  
5 the putty-like substance was located at the predetermined location; and  
evaluating the clearance by determining whether the initial thickness of the putty-like substance has changed as a result of sitting the person on the cushion with the anatomical portion adjacent to the support contour.